Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1 – 13: Cancelled

14. (New) A method for determining the remaining operational life of elastic cables that are composed of individual filaments and serve for mooring a vessel to a buoy, including the steps of:

plotting a fatigue curve for the filaments of a cable via dynamic tests;

producing a test cable from the material of the cable, wherein said test cable is comprised of a number of sections that are detachably connected to one another;

determining the minimum breaking load of said sections of said test cable;

mooring the vessel to the buoy via one of the elastic cables accompanied by the interposition of a load-monitoring system;

placing said test cable adjacent to the one elastic cable;

removing said sections from said test cable at prescribed time intervals;

determining the minimum breaking load for each removed test cable section and forming a first coefficient A with reference to the previously determined minimum breaking load of said sections, wherein said first coefficient A represents a loss of carrying strength as a consequence of environmental influences;

from said first coefficients A determined for all of said test cable sections, plotting an environment-dependent curve against time;

associating with each first coefficient A a second coefficient B that, for the point in time of the removal of a pertaining test cable section, is determined from the fatigue curve on the basis

of a load spectrum supplied by said load-monitoring system, wherein said second coefficient B represents the loss of carrying strength as a consequence of the load influences;

multiplying said first and second coefficients A and B together to form reduction factors;

at the conclusion of the foregoing test phase, dismantling said elastic cable, determining its remaining strength, and comparing it with the previously determined minimum breaking load to form an actual reduction factor, thus enabling a comparison with the reduction factor determined at the same point in time via said test cable;

forming actual reduction factors of a future cable from said second coefficient B, which is determined from the fatigue curve and the actual load spectrum, and from said first coefficient A, which is read from the environment-dependent curve; and

estimating the remaining operational life of said future cable from the actual reduction factors thereof, including a safety factor.

15. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein said reduction factors of said test cable sections are plotted as a remaining strength curve against time.

16. (New) A method according to claim 15, wherein said remaining strength curve is extrapolated beyond said test phase.

17. (New) A method according to claim 14, which includes the step of using a test cable having a diameter that is smaller than a diameter ofsaid elastic cable.

18. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein said test cable is connected with said elastic cable in a friction-free manner.

19. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein said test cable sections are removed at time intervals of three months.

20. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein the step of determining the minimum breaking load of the removed test cable sections is carried out by tests on the removed sections themselves or by individual filament tests on the filaments thereof, as a function of a

comparison between results of preliminary tests and manufacturer specifications.

21. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein said dynamic tests are carried out for establishing the fatigue curve of individual filaments.

22. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein said fatigue curve is established similar to a Wöhler curve.

23. (New) A method according to claim 14, wherein said coefficients B are determined by using the "Palgren-Minor-Hypothesis".

24. (New) A method according to claim 14, which includes the step of using a test cable that has a length that does not fall below the minimum length of wave lengths that are to be predominantly expected at a location of application of the method.

25. (New) A method according to claim 24, wherein said test cable is connected to said buoy via an extension section.

26. (New) A method according to claim 14, which includes the further steps of:

splicing loops onto ends of said test cable sections,

superimposing loops of adjacent test cable sections, and

wrapping around cords of said superimposed loops.